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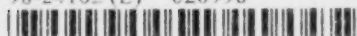
Implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Report of the Secretary-General

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* A/53/150.



I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 52/56 of 10 December 1997, requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its fifty-third session on the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 82).¹

2. In response to that request, the present report provides information on the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference.

3. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Working Group of the Whole to Evaluate the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space considered the question of the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference during their 1998 sessions. Accordingly, the information contained in the present report primarily reflects the result of the work of the Committee, whose report² is also before the General Assembly.

II. Working Group of the Whole to Evaluate the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

4. The Working Group of the Whole was reconvened by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its 1998 session in accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/56 to conclude its evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82.

5. At its 1998 session, the Committee noted that the Working Group of the Whole had refined or interpreted several recommendations of UNISPACE 82, making them more specific to facilitate their implementation. The Committee further noted that as a result, good progress had been achieved, notably in the following areas:

(a) Arrangement of a fellowship programme for the organization of in-depth training courses and workshops on advanced applications of space science and technology;

(b) Enhancement of international and regional cooperation in space-related activities;

(c) Preparation of a series of technical studies relating to specific areas of space science and technology and their applications;

(d) Promotion of a greater exchange of actual experiences and cooperation in space science and technology;

(e) Establishment of regional centres for space science and technology education in each economic region, in order to stimulate the growth of indigenous nuclei and an autonomous technological base in space technology in developing countries;

(f) Efforts to arrange for appropriate allocations from the United Nations budget for the expanded activities of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and for requesting Member States to support the Programme through voluntary contributions, both in cash and in kind.

III. Inter-agency cooperation

6. In paragraph 20 of its resolution 52/56, the General Assembly invited all Governments within the organizations of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations working in the field of outer space or on space-related matters to take effective action for the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference. In that connection, the Committee noted with appreciation the participation in all stages of its work and that of its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee by representatives of United Nations bodies, the specialized agencies and other international organizations.

7. Several United Nations bodies and specialized agencies have extensive space-related programmes and have contributed to the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, particularly the secretariat of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the International

Maritime Organization, the International Telecommunication Union and the World Meteorological Organization. Details of these programmes can be found in the yearly reports of the Secretary-General on coordination of outer space activities within the United Nations system. The latest report (A/AC.105/700) contains an overview of the work programme of United Nations bodies and agencies for 1998 and 1999.

8. The programmes and projects of the organizations of the United Nations system are coordinated at annual inter-agency meetings. At its nineteenth session, the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities had extensive discussions on the inter-agency coordination in matters relating to the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III). (See also section VIII below on UNISPACE III.) The Meeting agreed that UNISPACE III provided a unique opportunity for the organizations of the United Nations system to make greater use of space technology and its applications in fulfilling their mandates and to coordinate activities further, with particular focus on those which would be included in the plan of action of UNISPACE III. The Meeting submitted its collective views, as contained in annex I to its report (A/AC.105/701), to the Committee, in its role as the Preparatory Committee for UNISPACE III, at its 1998 session concerning the priority areas in which organizations within the United Nations system would strengthen their efforts to promote the utilization of space technology and its applications to assist in solving problems of global or regional significance.

IV. Studies

9. In response to the requests of the Working Group of the Whole at its tenth session, the Secretariat prepared and submitted to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its thirty-fifth session, in 1998, the following reports and study: "Implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space: international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space: activities of Member States" (A/AC.105/679 and Add.1-2) and "Applications of space communications technology to distance education" (A/AC.105/667).

10. Some of the technical studies requested by the Working Group of the Whole were integrated into background papers that the Secretariat had prepared for UNISPACE III. (See also section VIII below on UNISPACE III.) With the publication of those background papers, all the

technical studies requested by the Working Group of the Whole were completed.

11. In accordance with recommendations of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, the Secretariat will prepare for submission to the Subcommittee at its 1999 session the following reports: reports from Member States and international organizations involved in space activities on their research on space debris, including practices that have been adopted and that have proved effective in minimizing the creation of space debris; reports from space agencies on various steps that they have taken to reduce the growth or damage potential of space debris; and reports from Member States on their research on the collision of orbiting space objects with nuclear power sources on board with space debris.

V. United Nations Programme on Space Applications

12. In paragraph 7 of its resolution 37/90 of 10 December 1982, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendations of the Conference that the United Nations Programme on Space Applications should be directed towards seven specific objectives. The activities conducted in 1997 by the Programme and the plans for the period 1998-1999 to meet those objectives are contained in the report of the United Nations Expert on Space Applications (A/AC.105/693 and Add.1 and Corr.1).

A. Training course/workshops/conferences/symposium/seminar

13. Part of the activities carried out or planned under the Programme in 1998, in cooperation with other United Nations bodies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and Governments of Member States, include the following training course, workshops, conferences, symposium and seminar:

(a) United Nations Seminar on the Age of Space Commercialization: Evolving Role of Governments and Industries in Enhancing International Cooperation in Space Activities, organized in cooperation with the Government of Austria;

(b) United Nations/Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific Workshop on Emerging Trends in Satellite Meteorology: Technology and Applications, organized in cooperation with the Centre for

Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific;

(c) Second United Nations International Conference on Spin-off Benefits of Space Technology, organized in cooperation with the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing;

(d) United Nations Asia-Pacific regional preparatory conference for UNISPACE III, organized in cooperation with the Government of Malaysia and the European Space Agency (ESA);

(e) Eighth United Nations International Training Course on Remote Sensing Education for Educators, organized in cooperation with the Government of Sweden;

(f) United Nations/European Space Agency Symposium on Economic Benefits of Using Space Technology Applications in Developing Countries, organized in cooperation with the Government of Austria, the province of Styria, the city of Graz and ESA;

(g) First United Nations Workshop on International Search and Rescue Satellite System (COSPAS-SARSAT) for African Search and Rescue Points of Contact (SPOCs) of the Spanish Mission Control Centre (SPMCC), organized in cooperation with SPMCC of the Government of Spain and ESA;

(h) United Nations/International Astronautical Federation (IAF) Workshop on Expanding the User Community of Space Technology in Developing Countries, organized in cooperation with the Government of Australia and IAF;

(i) United Nations Latin American and Caribbean regional preparatory conference for UNISPACE III, organized in cooperation with the Government of Chile;

(j) Workshop on the Evaluation of the United Nations/Swedish International Development Agency International Training Course Series on Remote Sensing Education for Educators, organized in cooperation with the Government of Sweden;

(k) United Nations African and Middle East regional preparatory conference for UNISPACE III, organized in cooperation with the Government of Morocco.

14. In 1999, the following training course, workshops, conferences, symposium and seminar are planned:

(a) United Nations regional preparatory conference for UNISPACE III, to be held in Romania;

(b) Ninth United Nations/Sweden International Training Course on Remote Sensing Education for Educators, to be held at Stockholm;

(c) Third United Nations International Conference on Spin-off Benefits of Space Technology: Challenges and Opportunities;

(d) United Nations/ESA Workshop on Basic Space Science: World Space Observatory;

(e) United Nations/Austria symposium on the use of space technology for development, to be held at Graz, Austria;

(f) United Nations/IAF Workshop on Information in Support of Sustainable Management, to be held in the Netherlands;

(g) United Nations Third Seminar on Space Futures and Human Security, to be held in the province of Tyrol, Austria;

(h) United Nations/China workshop on applications of space technology in sustainable agricultural development, to be held in China.

B. Development of indigenous capability

15. In accordance with the recommendation of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space concerning the development of indigenous capabilities, the General Assembly, in resolution 45/72 of 11 December 1990, endorsed the recommendation of the Committee that the United Nations should lead an international effort to establish regional centres for space science and technology in existing national/regional educational institutions in the developing countries. In its resolution 50/27 of 6 December 1995, the Assembly endorsed the recommendation of the Committee that these centres be established on the basis of affiliation to the United Nations as early as possible. The Secretariat has made further progress in establishing regional centres for space science and technology education, affiliated to the United Nations and has provided updated information on its activities concerning the regional centres in the report of the United Nations Expert on Space Applications (A/AC.105/693 and Add.1 and Corr.1) and has also reported to the Committee on the latest status of this initiative.

16. The Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific was inaugurated in India in November 1995, and its fifth education programme, focusing on space science, started in June 1998. The four

previous education programmes had focused on remote sensing and geographic information systems (two courses), satellite communications and satellite meteorology. Participation in the Governing Board of the Centre and in its activities is open to Member States of the region, and in due course and upon approval by the Governing Board, the Centre would grow into a network of nodes enabling it to fully utilize the resources and potential of the region.

17. As for the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, the agreement establishing the Centre was ratified by the parliamentary bodies of its host countries, Mexico and Brazil, in 1997. Regarding the region of Africa, the Centres for Space Science and Technology Education for French-speaking African countries and for English-speaking African countries are expected to be inaugurated in Morocco and Nigeria, respectively, by the end of 1998.

18. In Western Asia, an evaluation mission, with the participation of technical experts from the Office for Outer Space Affairs and France, was dispatched in June 1998 to Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, which had continued to offer to host a regional centre for space science and technology education. Arrangements for the above region are under discussion between the Governments of the countries concerned and the United Nations.

19. In the case of eastern, central-eastern and south-eastern Europe, discussions among Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Turkey are in progress on the establishment of a network of space science and technology education and research institutions. Those countries agreed to work with the Office for Outer Space Affairs to undertake a study on the technical requirements, design, operation mechanism and funding of the network and decided that an evaluation mission for this purpose should be undertaken before the end of 1998. Italy also expressed its intention to support this initiative to establish the network.

C. Technical advisory services

20. In paragraph 7 (g) of its resolution 37/90, the General Assembly decided that the United Nations Programme on Space Applications should, upon request by Member States or any of the specialized agencies, be directed towards the provision or arrangements for provision of technical advisory services on space applications projects. With regard to that mandate, the Programme has provided or is providing assistance in the following areas:

(a) In collaboration with ESA and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in implementing a pilot programme, as follow-up to the series of training courses on European Remote Sensing Satellite (ERS) data applications, to enable scientists from Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean to receive and utilize ERS data of ESA in sustainable development projects;

(b) To the Government of Uruguay, in its follow-up, as *pro tempore* secretariat, of the recommendations of the Third Space Conference of the Americas;

(c) To the Government of the Republic of Korea, in the growth and operation of the Asia-Pacific Satellite Communications Council (see para. 23 below);

(d) In collaboration with ESA, in follow-up activities relating to the series of workshops on basic space science, including: operation of a radiotelescope in Colombia; refurbishment of the Kottamia Telescope in Egypt; participation of Egypt in the United States of America/Russian Federation Mars Mission 2001; circulation of a newsletter entitled *African Skies* for the astronomical community in Africa; and establishment of an astronomical telescope facility at the National University of Paraguay;

(e) To the region of Africa, in implementing the project entitled "Cooperative Information Network Linking Scientists and Professionals in Africa (COPINE)", which would establish an efficient communication network among African and European professionals and scientists at the national, continental and intercontinental levels, and would allow for the exchange of valuable information on health care, agriculture, education, science and technology, and the management and monitoring of natural resources and environment;

(f) In collaboration with the Government of Sweden, in evaluating the impact of the series of United Nations/Sweden international training courses on remote sensing education for educators, organized in 1990 and annually from 1992;

(g) In collaboration with space agencies and international organizations which use Earth observations data, in an initiative by the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites to review the efforts of space agencies and user organizations in the past 25 years in observing the Earth, assess the capabilities of Earth observation systems and develop a reference document;

(h) To the small island developing States in Asia and the Pacific, in developing and implementing a proposal to establish a satellite-based warning broadcasting service, and to those in the Caribbean, in developing a project to use

space technology for the protection of the coastal environment and the enhancement of disaster preparedness;

(i) To the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, in developing a project proposal for the management of large marine ecosystems in the Gulf of Guinea in West Africa;

(j) To the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, in developing and implementing a space-related segment of the system for monitoring illicit crops, within the framework of the global plan for the elimination of illicit crops.

D. Long-term fellowships

21. In promoting the development of indigenous capability, seven long-term fellowships will be awarded for the in-depth training of individuals from developing countries in the areas of space antennas and propagation; remote sensing information systems; remote sensing instrumentation; photogrammetry and remote sensing; and geodesy and cartography. For the 1998–1999 period, the Government of China has offered two fellowships, and ESA has renewed its offer of fellowships.

E. Regional mechanisms of cooperation

22. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/56, the Secretariat continued its efforts to strengthen the regional mechanisms of cooperation in carrying out various activities in the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

23. The efforts of the Programme made through its advisory service to the Government of the Republic of Korea resulted in the rapid growth and operation of the Asia-Pacific Satellite Communications Council (APSCC), which aims at promoting cooperation and harmonization in the development and utilization of satellite communications in the region. The growing recognition of the Council since its establishment has resulted in its broad international membership.

24. The establishment of regional centres for space science and technology education, the primary goal of which is to enhance the academic and professional capabilities as well as the technical infrastructure in space science and technology in the institutions in developing countries in each region, is also viewed as being very much a part of the

Secretariat's effort to strengthen mechanisms of regional cooperation. Once established, each centre would be able to expand and become part of a network that could cover specific programme elements in established institutions related to space technology in each region.

25. The follow-up activities to the workshops on basic space science (see para. 20 (d) above) also resulted in the enhancement of regional cooperation. The assistance provided to the Governments of Colombia, Egypt, Paraguay and the astronomical community in Africa contributed to the development of international astronomical observatory networks and the enhancement of research opportunities in the fields of astronomy and planetary sciences in Western Asia, Latin America and Africa.

26. The Programme continues to contribute to the implementation of the recommendations of the Third Space Conference of the Americas, which adopted the Punta del Este Declaration (A/51/682, annex). The Declaration reaffirms the commitment of States in the Americas to the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space. The Conference adopted a plan of action, aimed at promoting and strengthening multilateral cooperation programmes in the region.

27. In the context of the preparations for UNISPACE III, the Programme contributes to strengthening regional cooperation towards achieving the objectives of UNISPACE III by holding regional preparatory conferences in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and Eastern Europe. (See section VIII below on UNISPACE III.)

VI. International Space Information Service

28. In paragraph 8 of its resolution 37/90, the General Assembly decided to establish an International Space Information Service, consisting initially of a directory of sources of information and data services to provide direction, upon request, to accessible data banks and information sources.

29. With regard to that mandate, the International Space Information Service published *Highlights in Space* (A/AC.105/691 and Corr.1), based on annual reports prepared by COSPAR and IAF, including a submission by the International Institute of Space Law (IISL); the ninth volume of *Seminars of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications* (A/AC.105/690), containing selected papers from the seminars, workshops and training courses of the Programme in 1997; and *Education, Training,*

Research and Fellowship Opportunities in Space Science and Technology and its Applications: A Directory (A/AC.105/671).

30. Further progress has been made to augment the International Space Information Service through the development of the home page on the Internet. The home page of the Office for Outer Space Affairs currently contains information on all the space-related legal instruments adopted by the General Assembly, information on the Committee and its subsidiary bodies, including the latest information on UNISPACE III, an overview of the Programme on Space Applications, space-related information submitted by Member States and a "frequently-asked questions" page where common questions relating to the United Nations and outer space are answered.

VII. Voluntary contributions

31. In paragraph 10 of its resolution 37/90, the General Assembly appealed to all Governments to make voluntary contributions, either in money or in kind, towards carrying out the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. In his note verbale dated 11 March 1983, the Secretary-General brought that paragraph to the attention of Member States, particularly with respect to the newly mandated and expanded activities of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. Member States and intergovernmental organizations that have responded to this appeal since the fifty-second session of the Assembly have been mentioned under appropriate headings in the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.²

VIII. Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

32. In paragraph 23 of its resolution 52/56, the General Assembly agreed that the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III)³ shall be convened at the United Nations Office at Vienna from 19 to 30 July 1999 as a special session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, open to all States Members of the United Nations. In the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Preparatory Committee, the Advisory Committee and the executive secretariat to carry out the tasks entrusted to them in the report of the Committee on its fortieth session⁴ and to report

to the Assembly at its fifty-third session on the progress made in the preparatory work for UNISPACE III. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Office for Outer Space Affairs have been acting as the Preparatory Committee, Advisory Committee and the executive secretariat, respectively, in response to a request by the Assembly in its resolution 51/123 of 13 December 1996.

33. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/56, paragraph 17, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee reconvened the Working Group of the Whole to assist the Advisory Committee in giving full consideration to the tasks entrusted to it by the General Assembly. The Working Group provided detailed comments on the structure and content of the text of a document which had been prepared by the executive secretariat in response to a request by the Preparatory Committee at its 1997 session and which contained elements to be considered for inclusion in the full draft report of UNISPACE III. The Working Group also made recommendations concerning the organization of UNISPACE III, including the establishment of main committees and the composition of the bureau, consideration of agenda items, the participation of international organizations and industry, rules of procedure, establishment of a Technical Forum⁵ as a technical body of UNISPACE III and organization of regional preparatory conferences. The Advisory Committee noted that the report of the Working Group (A/AC.105/697 and Corr.1, annex II) provided the basis for the Preparatory Committee to carry out the tasks entrusted to it by the General Assembly.

34. The Preparatory Committee considered the matter and endorsed the recommendations of the Working Group of the Subcommittee and the Advisory Committee. The Preparatory Committee decided to establish a Working Group of the Whole to assist the Committee in carrying out the tasks entrusted to it by the General Assembly and requested the Working Group to give full consideration to those tasks relating to the preparation of the draft report of UNISPACE III and the provisional rules of procedure. The Working Group conducted a detailed consideration of the text of the first full draft report of UNISPACE III, including "The Space Millennium: Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development" (A/CONF.184/PC/L.1), which had been prepared by the Secretariat. The Working Group provided detailed comments concerning the structure and text of the report and prepared a draft text of the executive summary of the report. The Working Group noted that the executive secretariat would revise the text of the report, on the basis of comments made by the Working Group, and circulate the second full draft report to Member States at the end of

September 1998, including the Vienna Declaration and the executive summary. The Working Group also agreed on the text of the provisional rules of procedure, which is contained in annex to the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space,² and recommended that the provisional rules of procedure should be submitted to the General Assembly for its endorsement at its fifty-third session.

35. The Preparatory Committee agreed with the recommendations made by its Working Group of the Whole. Concerning the organizational aspects of UNISPACE III, the Preparatory Committee made recommendations, including those relating to the participation of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and private industry. The Preparatory Committee agreed that the Advisory Committee at its 1999 session should reach agreement on the distribution of posts of the bureau of the Conference, allocation of agenda items between main committees and substantive agenda items to be considered by workshops and seminars to be organized within the framework of the Technical Forum. In that connection, the executive secretariat was requested to submit proposals to assist the Advisory Committee in considering those matters at its 1999 session.

36. The Preparatory Committee noted that the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had agreed to make a contribution to the deliberations of UNISPACE III on issues relating to the promotion of international cooperation in space-related activities and the development of space law, as well as other relevant legal issues. The Committee endorsed the recommendation of the Subcommittee that the Chairman of the Legal Subcommittee should report to UNISPACE III on the work of the Subcommittee, including its past achievements, current work and new challenges in the development of space law.

37. The Preparatory Committee noted with satisfaction that, within the framework of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and with the co-sponsorship of ESA, the regional preparatory conference for UNISPACE III for Asia and the Pacific had been successfully held at Kuala Lumpur from 18 to 22 May 1998. The Committee also noted that regional preparatory conferences for UNISPACE III would also be held at Concepción, Chile, from 12 to 16 October 1998, at Rabat from 26 to 30 October 1998 and in Romania from 25 to 29 January 1999. The Preparatory Committee also noted with satisfaction that, in response to its request made at its 1997 session, the executive secretariat had prepared background papers (A/CONF.184/BP.1-12) covering the topics included in the provisional agenda for UNISPACE III.

38. The deliberations of the Preparatory Committee are contained in paragraphs 23 to 44 of the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the work of its forty-first session.²

39. In 1999, the Advisory and Preparatory committees will meet from 22 to 26 February and from 14 to 16 July, respectively, to consider the revised version of the draft report (A/CONF.184/PC/L.1/Rev.1), with a view to reaching agreement on the text, and to finalize all arrangements for UNISPACE III. Outcomes of their 1999 sessions will be reported to the pre-Conference consultations on 18 July, which will be open to all States participating in UNISPACE III.

Notes

¹ See *Report of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Vienna, 9-21 August 1982* (A/CONF.101/10 and Corr.1 and 2).

² *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 2^a* (A/53/20).

³ The primary objectives of UNISPACE III, as adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 52/56 and contained in document A/AC.105/672, annex II, are as follows: (a) to promote effective means of using space technology to assist in the solution of problems of regional or global significance, and (b) to strengthen the capabilities of Member States, in particular developing countries, to use the applications of space research for economic, social and cultural development.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 20 (A/52/20).

⁵ The Technical Forum consists of technical presentation sessions, workshops/seminars, a poster session, public evening lectures and a space exhibition. The organization of the space exhibition, with the participation of space-related industries, is coordinated by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.